

## Benefit design and cost sharing in Medicare Advantage plans

ISSUE: The MMA mandates that MedPAC examine the extent to which cost-sharing structures under Part C plans affect access to covered services or are used to select enrollees based on the health status of eligible individuals. Key questions include:

- Are there observable patterns in plan cost-sharing requirements that would be disproportionately burdensome for beneficiaries with certain conditions or circumstances (for example, those on chemotherapy or those who use dialysis services)?
- If so, is this problem widespread?
- Can problems be addressed? If so, how?

KEY POINTS: For the September meeting, MedPAC staff will present:

- background for examining this topic;
- the findings of an expert panel convened in March 2004;
- preliminary results of data analysis on the range of cost-sharing observed among MA plans operating during 2004.

Additional analyses are underway and will be incorporated into the full draft report, which the Commission will review in November.

ACTION: The Commission should discuss the evidence presented thus far and any identify analytical or policy issues that the staff should address as this work proceeds.

STAFF CONTACT: Rachel Schmidt (202-220-3721) and Jill Bernstein (202-220-3740).